

RAPTORS OF NYS



Peregrine Falcon

Endangered Species

This crow-sized bird can dive at speeds up to 200 miles per hour. It grows to 18 inches long, with a wingspan up to 46 inches. Eating mostly birds, the peregrine nests on bridges and tall buildings in urban areas. It also nests on cliffs in the Adirondacks and sometimes in the Hudson Valley. In winter, adults can be seen in urban areas, while some of the young migrate south. DEC's restoration project for the peregrine has been very successful.

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Red-tailed Hawk

New York's most common hawk, the "red-tail" is often seen soaring over fields or perched in trees and on power poles along highways. It grows to 22 inches long, with a wingspan up to 56 inches. It feeds mostly on small mammals and birds. Nests are bulky and made of sticks, high up in trees next to open fields. Some birds are year-round residents.



Sharp-shinned Hawk

Species of Special Concern

A quick, dove-sized bird with rapid wing beats, this raptor has a slim body and long tail. Growing up to 13 inches long, its wingspan is up to 26 inches. It feeds on small birds and can sometimes be found chasing birds at backyard feeders. Nests are found in woodlands, mostly in conifers. Some birds migrate, but they can be found in New York in the winter.



Osprey

Species of Special Concern

This fish-eating raptor dives feet first, sometimes going completely under water to catch its prey. Growing up to 26 inches long with a wingspan of up to 67 inches, ospreys are found near large lakes, rivers and ocean bays. Large stick nests are in trees or on platforms on Long Island, in the Adirondacks, and around St. Lawrence Valley, with a few scattered in the central and southwestern parts of the state. In winter it migrates to Central and South America.



Bald Eagle

Threatened Species

Our national emblem grows to 35 inches long, with a wingspan of up to 89 inches. It feeds primarily on fish and waterfowl, and lives near large lakes and rivers. The white head and tail occur at about four years of age. Bald eagles winter throughout New York. DEC's restoration project increased the number of nesting bald eagles in the state.



Turkey Vulture

These large raptors are often seen riding on wind currents. Growing up to 28 inches long, its wingspan is up to 81 inches. This bird has no feathers on its red head, and it migrates in winter. Nests are in trees, caves, thickets and old buildings. It eats carrion that it finds by sight and smell.